



Hurricane Katrina's impact on the care of survivors with chronic medical conditions

Author(s): Kessler RC, Wang PS, Kendrick D, Lurie N, Springgate B
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Abstract:

BACKGROUND: Hurricane Katrina affected a population with significant levels of chronic disease. **OBJECTIVE:** The extent to which Hurricane Katrina disrupted treatments is not known but would be useful information for future disaster planning. **PARTICIPANTS:** 1,043 displaced and nondisplaced English-speaking Katrina survivors ages 18 and older who resided in affected areas before the hurricane. **DESIGN and SETTING:** A geographically representative telephone survey conducted between January 19 and March 31, 2006. **MEASUREMENTS and MAIN RESULTS:** The proportions of survivors with chronic illnesses in the 12 months before the hurricane and the extent to which those with chronic illnesses cut back or terminated treatments because of the disaster. Correlates and reasons given by survivors for disrupted treatment were identified. Most (73.9%) Katrina survivors had 1 or more chronic conditions in the year before the hurricane; of these, 20.6% cut back or terminated their treatment because of the disaster. Disruptions in treatment were significantly more common among the non-elderly, uninsured, socially isolated, those with housing needs, or for conditions remaining relatively asymptomatic but still dangerous if untreated. Frequent reasons for disrupted care included problems accessing physicians (41.1%), medications (32.5%), insurance/financial means (29.3%), transportation (23.2%), or competing demands on time (10.9%). **CONCLUSIONS:** Many Katrina survivors burdened by chronic disease had their treatments disrupted by the disaster. Future disaster management plans should anticipate and address such chronic care needs, with timely reestablishment of primary care services, access to medications, and means to address financial and structural barriers to treatment.

Source: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2219784>

Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Health Professional, Policymaker, Public



Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Extreme Weather Event

Extreme Weather Event: Hurricanes/Cyclones

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Ocean/Coastal

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

United States

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

General Health Impact

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern:

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Low Socioeconomic Status, Racial/Ethnic Subgroup

Other Racial/Ethnic Subgroup: Not specified

Other Vulnerable Population: People with chronic health conditions

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content